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CHILDREN'S COTTAGE
WITH
OUTDOOR SLEEPING PORCHES

RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD-HELPING
105 EAST TWENTY-SECOND ST.
NEW YORK
1912

Pamphlet
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UNIV OF CALIFORNIA

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PLANS FOR A CHILDREN'S COTTAGE WITH OUTDOOR SLEEPING PORCHES

AT LEAST one-half of all children sent to juvenile reformatories, orphan asylums, etc., are physically defective, either because of bad heredity, or because of poor feeding and unfavorable environment.

Many of these children are taken from insanitary surroundings of homes, and are put into dormitories in a congregate building. These dormitories have usually insufficient ventilation and sunlight. They are often placed on one side of the building, where cross ventilation cannot be secured, and they are so built that window ventilation cannot be had without a direct draft upon the heads of the sleepers. It is a common thing to find the sanitary conditions in such dormitories quite as bad as in the homes from which these unfortunate children come. The practice is now well established of providing outdoor sleeping porches, not only for tubercular patients and patients suffering from pneumonia, but also for crippled, deformed and anemic children, who are either sick or physically defective, yet these children sleep with impunity in the open, not only without deleterious effects, but with great delight and benefit.

If sick people and feeble anemic children can sleep in the open air with beneficial effects, what is to prevent the adoption of the same method for healthy growing children? It is proposed, that in building institutions for children, arrangements shall be made for outdoor sleeping porches for at least 25 per cent of the children. It is believed that this

method might be profitably adopted for the entire institution population.

Plans have been prepared by Hastings H. Hart, director of the Department of Child-Helping of the Russell Sage Foundation, with the assistance of Mr. Robert W. Gardner, of New York, Architect, for a cottage to accommodate twenty children, with four outdoor sleeping porches for five children each, and with indoor dressing-rooms, bathrooms, study, dining room, kitchen, and apartments for house father and house mother. Should these plans be used for a juvenile reformatory cottage, the sleeping porches can be protected by steel lattice work, if desired, but it is believed that most superintendents would prefer to build them without such protection, relying upon the moral force of the institution, or locking up the day clothes of the boys at night.

Plans for sleeping porches have been prepared under the advice of the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. The porches have been arranged in two stories, in order to bring the children under the close supervision of the house father and house mother. They have been so arranged, with reference to the sitting room and bedroom of those officers, that the officers can observe each of the four sleeping porches at all hours of the night, without leaving their apartment. The electric lights on the porches will be controlled from the centre.

The ready observation of the four sleeping porches is provided for by setting the apartments of the officers on a different level from those of the children, in order to enable them to command a view of two floors at once.

On the ground floor are provided two dressing rooms with locker, baths and lavatories, for ten children each. From the dressing rooms, two stairways lead to the first floor sleeping porches. A night toilet is located adjacent to each sleeping porch, within the walls of the central building in order to avoid danger of freezing.

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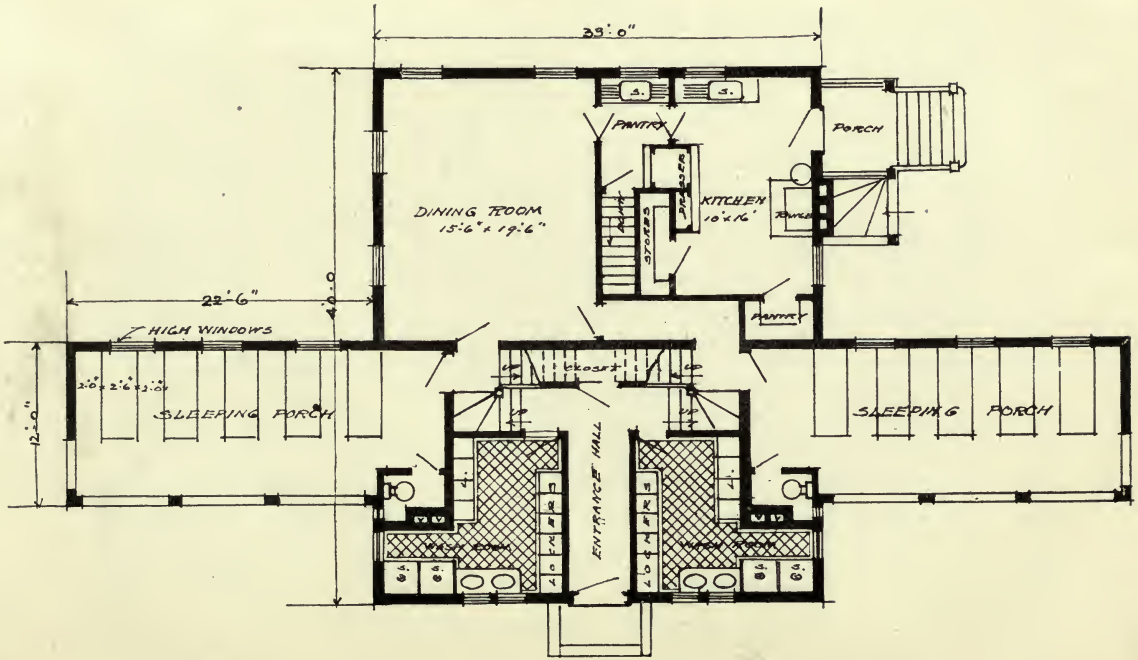
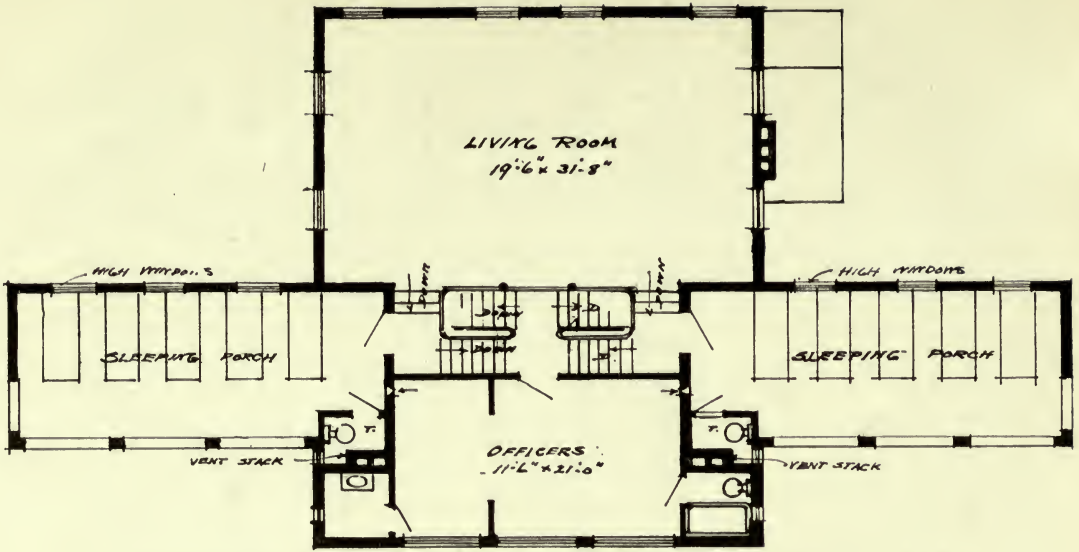


First Floor—Sleeping Porches, Dressing Rooms, Dining Room, Kitchen



SECOND FLOOR — SLEEPING PORCHES, OFFICERS' QUARTERS, CHILDREN'S LIVING ROOM

On the same level with the first floor sleeping porches are provided kitchen, pantry and dining room for twenty-two persons; the intention being to make this cottage an independent domestic establishment, the work of which will be performed by the cottage mother, with the assistance of the children. Immediately above the dressing rooms are the sitting room and bedroom of the cottage officers. These two rooms are supplied with large front windows, and are so arranged that cross ventilation can be provided.

Four feet higher than the officers' rooms are the second floor sleeping porches, and, on the same level, the children's study, arranged with windows on three sides, looking east, north and west. The study immediately adjoins the officers' apartments, and will be overlooked therefrom. By this arrangement the house mother, without leaving her own apartment, can have immediate supervision over the four sleeping rooms and the children's study.

The accompanying drawing illustrates the manner in which the sleeping porches can be overseen from the officers' apartments.

This cottage is planned to be built of glazed hollow tile, with floors of hollow tile and reinforced concrete. This construction will apply to the sleeping porches as well as to the central portion of the cottage. It will apply also to the second-story ceilings. The roof will be of tile, wooden joists and roof boards. The wooden portion of the roof will be the only inflammable part of the building, except the doors, windows and maple floors for the children's study and officers' apartments.

The cost of this cottage has been carefully estimated by the architect, the figures for the tiles, cement and mason work being based on actual bids, and the figures for the plumbing, woodwork, roof work, metal work, etc., being based on the architect's experience in similar buildings. The entire estimated cost is

$11,100. The cost of this cottage could be much reduced in some places, by building of wood, as has been done at the Good Will Farm, Hinckley, Maine, and the State Agricultural and Industrial School at Industry, N. Y.; but it is believed that, in the long run, the fireproof construction will be both cheaper and more sanitary.

The commission appointed to select a site, and make preliminary plans for the New York State Training School for Boys, has estimated the cost of building fifty dormitory cottages

Cross-section, Showing Sleeping Porches

for sixteen boys each, at $11,000 per cottage. This cottage will cost the same, and will provide for twenty children instead of sixteen, which is an increase of 25 per cent in capacity.

We are inclined to the opinion that within a few years new institutions for children will provide outdoor sleeping for at least the majority of the inmates. We are not prepared at this time to make a sweeping recommendation, but have no hesitation in expressing the belief that outdoor sleeping accommodation should be provided for at least 25 per cent of the children in the average juvenile reformatory, or home for dependent children.

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